

Tor the traveller the greater part of Persian territory is absolutely safe. I have ridden on horseback through it at every season of the year, in some regions without an escort, in others with Persian or Kurdish guards supplied by the local authorities, and was never actually the victim of any form of robbery, except the pilfering from an unguarded tent. Though travelling with only an Indian servant, I found the provincial authorities everywhere courteous, and ready to aid my journey by every means within their power, though in Persia as elsewhere I never claimed, and indeed never received, any special favour on the ground of sex.

A few darker shadows remain to be put in. There is no education truly so called for Persians, except in Tihiran, and under the existing system the next generation is not likely to be more enlightened than the present. All the towns and the larger villages possess mosque schools, in which the highest education bestowed is a smattering of Arabic and a knowledge of the tales of *Saadi*. The Persian characters are taught, and some attention is paid to calligraphy, for a man who can write well is sure to make a fair living. The parrot-like reading of the Koran in Arabic is the *summum lonum* of the teaching. Very few of the boys in the village schools learn to write, but if a clever lad aspires to be a *mirza*, or secretary he pays great attention to the formation of the Persian characters, and acquires that knowledge of compliment, phrase, and trope which is essential to his proposed

calling.

Beading, writing, and the elements of arithmetic are usual among the bazar class and merchants, but with the rest the slight knowledge of reading acquired in childhood is soon forgotten, and the ability to repeat a few verses from the Koran and a few prayers in Arabic is all that remains of the mosque school "education."